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ABSTRACT

This report describes the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and its role and responsibilities. The HEFCE was formed in 1992 to administer higher education functions in England. As a nondepartmental public body, the HEFCE has some autonomy from the government even though it administers public money. The HEFCE distributes public money to universities and higher education colleges for teaching, research, and strengthening links with businesses and the wide community. For this reason, the HEFCE has a leading role in developing higher education policies, providing guidance and promoting good practice on a range of issues. Money from the government is allocated in principle to higher education over a 3-year period. Grant letters are issued annually to each institution setting out the precise allocation of funds and the objectives for the forthcoming year. About two-thirds of HEFCE funds support learning in institutions of higher education. This document describes various aspects of the HEFCE mission and its operations. (SLD)

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ED 464 537

April 02/17

Guide

About the HEFCE

An introduction to the Higher Education Funding Council for England

Revised April 2002

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HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND

ED 464 537

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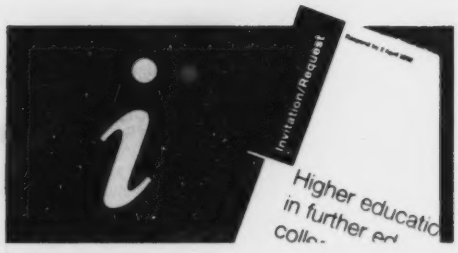


Publications referred to in this guide

All publications with an HEFCE reference number, for example HEFCE 02/03, are available from the HEFCE, as are our newsletter and annual report. Most publications are free of charge. To obtain copies, contact us on 0117 931 7035, by e-mail at publications@hefce.ac.uk or via our web-site at www.hefce.ac.uk

Introducing the HEFCE

Our mission: Working in partnership, we promote and fund high-quality, cost-effective teaching and research, meeting the diverse needs of students, the economy and society.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) was formed by the Government in 1992 to administer higher education funding in England. We work with universities, colleges, other education and research organisations, and the Government to allocate this funding.

As a non-departmental public body we have some autonomy from the Government even though we administer public money. We work within the policy framework set by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, but we are not part of the Department for Education and Skills.

In practice this means that we advise Government on the needs and development of higher education, and with our partners we help to develop higher education policy.

We develop and administer our funding programmes to support national higher education objectives, and we ensure that public funds for universities and colleges are used properly and efficiently. But, where appropriate, we also act as an advocate for higher education – promoting its benefits, achievements and opportunities to the individual, society and the economy.

Funding and other roles

We distribute public money to universities and higher education colleges for three main activities:

- teaching
- research
- strengthening links with business and the wider community.

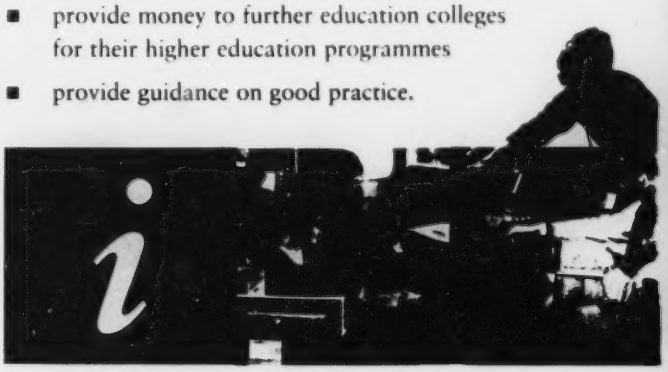
That means we have a leading role in developing higher education policies, and in ensuring that the sector remains healthy. To do so, we work closely with universities and colleges, and provide guidance and promote good practice on a range of issues. We fund the 131 universities and higher education colleges in the higher education sector, and higher education courses in 198 further education colleges.

We try to help universities and colleges understand and respond to government policies for higher education. And while we make sure that providers are accountable for their use of public funds, we try to do this without adding unduly to their administrative burdens.

We aim to ensure that public funds for higher education are distributed equitably and transparently, so that they secure the best value possible for the public benefit.

What we do – at a glance

- provide money to universities and colleges for higher education teaching, research and special activities
- fund programmes to support the development of higher education
- monitor financial and managerial health of universities and colleges
- ensure quality is monitored
- provide money to further education colleges for their higher education programmes
- provide guidance on good practice.



- HEFCE 2000-01 annual report, 'Making connections'
- 'HEFCE strategic plan 2001-06' (HEFCE 01/43)
- HEFCE web-site www.hefce.ac.uk under 'About us'
- Our helpdesk hefce@hefce.ac.uk

Funding universities and colleges

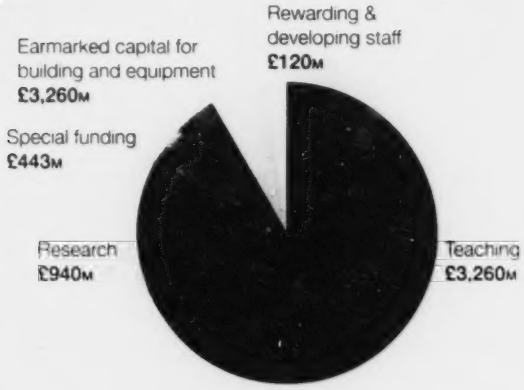
Each year we receive money from Government to distribute among universities and colleges in England.

There are two main categories of funding:

a. Recurrent funding distributed by formulae to pay for mainstream teaching and research activities. The formulae take account of the volume and mix of individual institutions' teaching and research. Most teaching and research funding is distributed in this way. The use of a formula for recurrent funding means universities and colleges know broadly how much to expect over the next 12 months. After we determine the amount of funding, it is provided in the form of a 'block grant' which institutions are free to allocate according to their own priorities within our broad guidelines.

b. Recurrent and capital funding distributed through special funding programmes, sometimes via a bidding process. All funding to support links with business and the community is provided in this way. Special funding is often a way to provide an incentive to undertake more innovative activities.

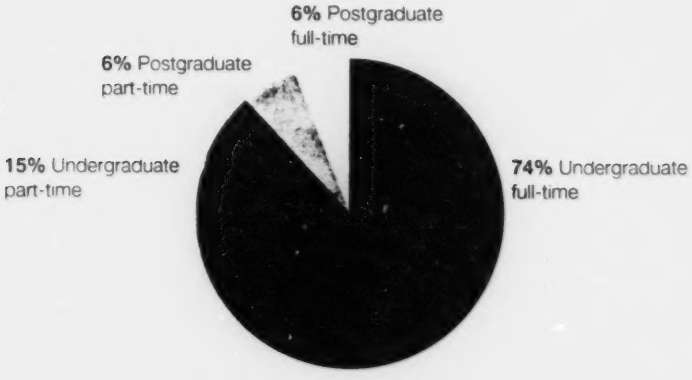
In 2002-03 we will distribute: £5.08 billion



In 329 institutions

78	universities
14	general higher education colleges
39	specialist higher education colleges
198	further education colleges providing higher education courses

For 948,000 students*



* Based on full-time equivalents for 2001-02, from data surveys in December 2001.

The annual funding cycle

The funding of universities and colleges is based on an annual cycle.

The Government decides in a spending review the amount of money to allocate in principle to higher education over a three-year period, and that is approved by Parliament. Detailed grant letters are then issued annually to each higher education institution, setting out the precise allocation of funds and objectives for the forthcoming year.

Start here

November

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills announces funding for higher education.

December

Higher education institutions and further education colleges supply information on the distribution of the current year's student numbers. This provides the data needed to calculate the following year's grant for teaching. Higher education institutions also supply information on their research activities. This provides the data needed to calculate the following year's grant for research. We make provisional decisions on the distribution of the total grant between the main headings – recurrent teaching and research, and special funding.

January

We decide the distribution of the total grant between the main headings – recurrent teaching and research, and special funding.

February

We decide the provisional distribution of grant to individual universities and colleges.

March

We announce the provisional distribution of grant to universities and colleges.

July

Following discussion with universities and colleges, updating of data and final decisions on additional student numbers and other factors, we announce the final distribution of grants.

- 'Funding higher education in England: How the HEFCE allocates its funds' (HEFCE 02/18) describes this process in greater detail

Funding learning and teaching

About two-thirds of HEFCE funds support learning and teaching in universities and colleges.

Through our funding we aim to promote:

- excellent learning and teaching, which meets the needs of students, employers and the nation
- a higher level of participation in higher education by groups that are currently under-represented.

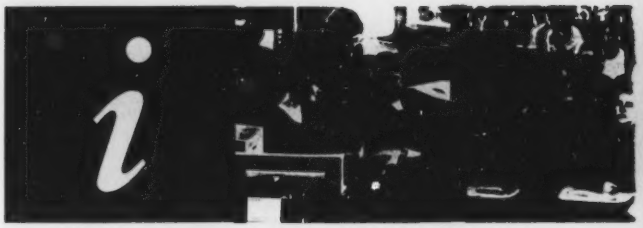
Principles of funding

Our funding method for teaching is based on the following principles:

- students that study similar subjects are funded equally, unless there are sound and justifiable reasons otherwise
- opportunities to enter higher education are increased for a wide range of people, with extra support for some, including part-timers and mature undergraduate students
- institutional diversity is recognised through funding specialist activities and particular characteristics that may increase costs.

How teaching and learning funding is distributed – price groups

Some subjects are more expensive to teach than others. They need laboratories and workshops while others are taught wholly in lecture theatres and seminar rooms.



- HEFCE web-site under 'Learning & teaching'

We define four broad groups of subjects (price groups A-D in the table below) for funding, and set relative costs based on the average of actual spending by universities and colleges across the sector. These relative costs are used to help distribute the money available each year.

This means that a university or college will receive twice as much money to support a student studying chemistry (price group B) as for a student taking social studies (price group D). Once the relative costs of all the students in that institution are calculated, the amount of money is adjusted to reflect the characteristics of the students and of the institution. For example, we take account of the numbers of students who are disabled, part-time, or from disadvantaged backgrounds, because it costs more to provide for them. We also allow extra funds for institutions that have high costs because, for example, they are based in London or have historic buildings to maintain.

Price groups for funding

Price group	Description	Cost weight
A	The clinical stages of medicine and dentistry courses and veterinary science	4.5
B	Laboratory-based subjects (science, pre-clinical stages of medicine and dentistry, engineering and technology)	2
C	Subjects with a studio, laboratory or fieldwork element (geography, art & design)	1.5
D	All other subjects	1

Funding research

In 2002-03 we will contribute about £940 million to research in universities and colleges. Virtually all will be distributed according to the quality and amount of research work.

HEFCE and Research Councils funding – the dual-support system

Public funds for research in universities and higher education colleges come from two main sources – the HEFCE and the Research Councils. In general, the HEFCE's funds pay for the research infrastructure, including staff salaries, while Research Council funds provide for specific research projects.

This is known as the 'dual-support system'. Our funding encourages innovation by giving institutions and researchers the discretion to decide what research to pursue. We fund research selectively, rewarding the best research in universities and colleges with a larger share of the money available.

Research Assessment Exercise to measure quality

To find out where the best research is taking place, we measure the quality of research in the higher education sector.

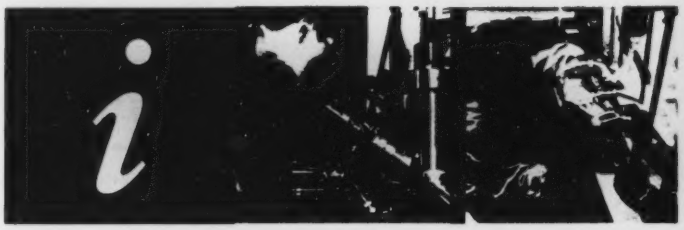
We assess research quality through a Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), which is held every few years. The latest one was in 2001. Each institution that takes part is awarded a rating, on a scale of 1 (the lowest rating) to 5* (five star), for the quality of its research in each subject area in which it chooses to submit its research for assessment.

The results inform the funding we provide to each university or higher education college – the higher the score the more is allocated.

As a result most of our research funding goes to those institutions with the best results. This provides an incentive to achieve world class research. In 2002-03, 75 per cent of HEFCE research funds will go to 25 higher education institutions.

The scoring system for RAE 2001

Ratings 1, 2 and 3b attract no funding, while a rating of 5* attracts approximately three times as much funding as a rating of 4 for the same volume of research activity.



- HEFCE web-site under 'Research'
- 'Recurrent grants for 2002-03' (HEFCE 02/11) shows the allocation of research funds for 2002-03
- RAE web-site www.rae.ac.uk
- Science Research Investment Fund 2001 (HEFCE 02/08)
- Research Councils web-site (www.research-councils.ac.uk)

Special funding

In addition to recurrent funding allocated by formula for general teaching and research activities, we fund special programmes where the money is allocated for specific, defined purposes.

Special funding supports universities and colleges in pursuing particular development objectives, and undertaking innovative projects. It also funds areas that would otherwise distort the formulae for teaching or research, if included there.

Special funding covers projects that:

- promote learning and teaching
- widen participation
- reach out to business and the wider community.

It also supports national facilities, capital programmes and the promotion of value for money.

Special funding runs for a fixed time, and is subdivided in phases of between one and three years. For each phase we allocate a fixed amount of money. Usually we invite competitive bids from institutions, and assess their proposals against set criteria, which are published beforehand. However, some special funding provides funding for all institutions that produce a satisfactory strategy for using the money.

Reach-out to business and the community

A major part of the special funding is to encourage more effective links between higher education and business and the wider community.

Such opportunities for knowledge transfer can generate wealth, help support regional economic regeneration by sharing resources and expertise, develop employment skills and enrich the social economy. There are already hundreds of commercial ventures between higher education institutions and businesses, from collaboration on research in science and technology to joint development of professional training courses. Several higher education institutions have purpose-built facilities for start-up businesses.

Even with all this activity there is a need for more links between higher education and business. The HEFCE funds a range of programmes in partnership with the Department for Education and Skills, the Department of Trade & Industry and the Home Office to encourage this. Each higher education institution has a role in developing links with business and the wider community, in line with its mission.

- Four current special initiatives:
  - Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (HEFCE 01/60)
  - Project capital round two (HEFCE 01/48)
  - Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEFCE 01/34)
  - Science Research Investment Fund (HEFCE 01/11)
- HEFCE web-site under 'Research', 'Learning & teaching' and 'Business & community' has information about special initiatives
- HEFCE web-site under 'Good Practice' lists the Value for Money studies
- HERO web-site under 'Business'
- 'Higher education-business interaction survey' (HEFCE 01/68)

Assuring quality of higher education

We are legally responsible for ensuring that the quality of education that we fund at universities and colleges is assessed. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) does this on our behalf.

The QAA organises reviews of the quality and standards of teaching in UK higher education. It has done this up until 2002 by looking at how each university and college manages the overall quality and standards of its provision, and by reviewing the quality of teaching and learning in each subject area.

In the past the QAA carried out extensive reviews and grading of teaching quality for each subject area in each institution. This combined self-assessment with visits by trained external assessors, usually drawn from other universities and colleges, who graded specific aspects of teaching and learning.

Following an extended process of consultation and discussion, a new method of quality assurance is being introduced from 2002-03. It is based on an institution-wide 'audit' of internal procedures for setting, monitoring and enhancing quality and standards, with selective follow-up if there are grounds for concern.

Publication of standards

The QAA publishes benchmark statements for each subject, to make explicit the general academic characteristics and standards of honours degrees in the UK. Institutions describe the content and approach of the course through a 'programme specification'. Students can then compare different courses and make sensible choices.

Assessments of higher education institutions can be viewed on the QAA web-site.

Developing higher education policy

We develop detailed policies for higher education within the broad guidelines set by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

We develop policy in partnership with others. We also commission research into aspects of higher education.

Consultations

We consult the higher education sector and other organisations when developing and deciding our policies. Our web-site lists the main organisations we work with (under 'Partners'), which are also the ones we consult most frequently.

Commissioned research

We fund research and development studies to improve our understanding when considering aspects of policy, and in response to issues raised by the higher education sector or the Government. Research also helps us to advise the Government for successive Spending Reviews. Studies with a wider relevance are published.

- QAA web-site www.qaa.ac.uk
- Two HEFCE consultations:
  - 'Partnerships for Progression' (HEFCE 01/73)
  - 'Supply and demand in higher education' (HEFCE 01/62)

Promoting the health of institutions

We monitor the financial and managerial health of universities and higher education colleges, and offer them support and advice.

One of our main aims is to contribute to the healthy development of higher education. We therefore do more than simply fund universities and higher education colleges.

Health monitoring

We meet with staff, ask universities and colleges to send us information, and check their records and documentation. Monitoring is carried out both by our regional teams and by our audit service (see page 9). Our Analytical Services Group collects data throughout the year to assess the amount of funding each institution should receive. It also publishes statistical data to inform the higher education sector of overall trends.

Regional structure

Many of our policies and programmes have a national perspective, and we support higher education institutions in their international, national, regional, sub-regional and local roles. Since 1999 when Regional Development Agencies were created, we have worked to build partnerships on a regional basis.

Our day-to-day contact with universities and colleges is generally via HEFCE regional consultants and their teams. The eight regional consultants each has responsibility for an English region (except the North-East and Eastern England which 'share' a consultant). Each team includes higher education advisers and finance advisers assigned to a number of institutions.

HEFCE regional consultants and higher education advisers are our main contact point with universities and colleges. They:

- represent the views of institutions within the HEFCE
- are sources of advice and guidance to institutions on HEFCE policies
- manage the formal interaction with institutions – reviewing corporate plans, annual operating statements and related strategies; monitoring institutional health; and overseeing allocation of HEFCE grants
- work with other regional agencies, acting as 'advocates' for higher education in the region.

Further education colleges and the HEFCE

In 1998 the HEFCE acquired responsibility for funding most higher education courses provided in further education colleges, which gave us a direct funding relationship with about 200 colleges.

Our relationship with further education colleges differs from our relationship with universities and higher education colleges. The Learning and Skills Council has responsibility for the overall health and development of further education colleges as the primary funder. We only fund higher education programmes, which are a minority of the college's activity.

- 'The Regional Mission', a series of regional reports published by the HEFCE and Universities UK
- 'Regional profiles of higher education' (HEFCE 01/39)
- 'Higher education and the regions: HEFCE policy statement' (HEFCE 01/18)

Ensuring accountability

We monitor higher education institutions to make sure that funds are spent appropriately.

Part of our role is to make sure the activities we fund are cost-effective and that public money is not misused. Therefore we need to check that higher education institutions are accountable for the funds provided to them.

We review higher education institutions' annual operating statements, which show how their written strategies and missions operate in practice. Our auditors also visit universities and colleges to meet senior staff and check institutional data, such as finance and student records. They look for evidence that higher education institutions are managing themselves and public money appropriately.

Reducing the accountability burden

Universities and colleges have to be accountable for their use of funds. However, the demands of accountability can add a considerable burden. In collaboration with other funders, we are seeking ways to reduce this burden. Below are some of the ways we have been seeking to do this:

a. We only ask for what we need, and we share information with other stakeholders where possible.

b. We distribute some special initiative funding by formula (see page 6), which avoids the need for an institution to put together a competitive bid which may then be turned down.

c. A review of the quality assurance process (see page 7) has resulted in a less burdensome method of assessment.

d. Our audit service will reduce the number of visits to institutions from once every three years to once every five years.

Encouraging good practice

We encourage higher education institutions to keep abreast of existing good practice, by publishing guidance and providing targeted funding.

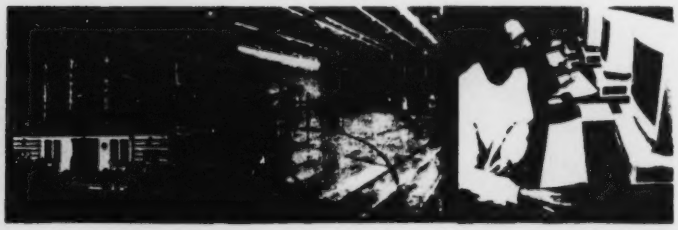
Because higher education institutions are so diverse, uniform solutions are inappropriate. But while we encourage universities and colleges to find answers to suit their own circumstances, we want them to make well-informed choices.

We publish good practice guides, written by the HEFCE or external consultants. We promote better practice on specific issues through special funding, such as the Fund for the Development of Good Management Practice. Where we fund projects, we expect the benefits and lessons to be shared with the rest of the sector so that universities and colleges can learn from each other.

- 'Better accountability for higher education' (HEFCE 00/36)
- Better Accountability through Partnerships web-site www.betteraccountability.com
- HEFCE web-site under 'Good practice'

Universities and higher education colleges

Higher education is provided by many different types of organisation, which carry out teaching, scholarship and research.



Why higher education institutions, not universities?

Not all higher education is provided by universities. Both universities and higher education colleges provide degree courses and Higher National Diplomas (as well as some other equivalent qualifications) as their main activity. Collectively they are known as higher education institutions. While many further education colleges also offer higher education courses, they are not classed as higher education institutions because their main activity is further education. The glossary at the back provides definitions of higher education and further education.

How higher education institutions were set up

Some institutions were set up centuries ago, established by Royal Charter or Act of Parliament. Oxford and Cambridge universities date from the twelfth century, but many 'old' universities were founded in the 1950s and 1960s. Polytechnics were given the status of universities under the Further and Higher Education Act in 1992. These are sometimes called 'new' universities, although some date back to the mid-19th century. Many higher education colleges were originally set up as church colleges. Some specialise in only one or two subject areas, such as music or art and design. Most higher education colleges are smaller than universities.

Governance

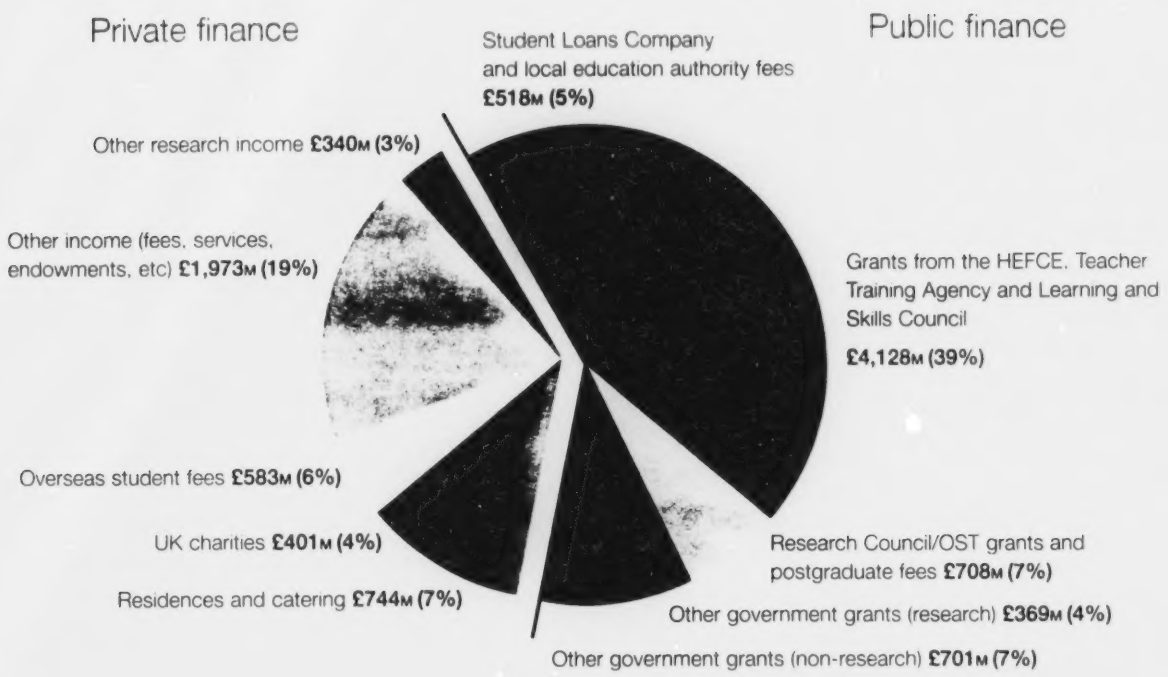
Higher education institutions are legally independent self-governing corporate bodies. Their councils or boards of governors are responsible for the effective management and future development of their affairs. The governing body is ultimately responsible for all affairs of the institution.

Partnerships between institutions

Many higher education institutions and further education colleges form partnerships, which we encourage. The benefits include a richer and more varied provision of higher education, and opportunities for working together on issues such as widening participation. Collaborative working can improve student choices and efficiency, simplify administration, and link further education colleges with the wider academic community. One common type of partnership is a franchise, where students are registered at one institution but taught at another for some or all of their course.

- 'Profiles of higher education institutions' (HEFCE 99/68)

Sources of finance for universities and colleges, 1999-2000


Private finance
Public finance
Student Loans Company and local education authority fees £518M (5%)
Other research income £340M (3%)
Other income (fees, services, endowments, etc) £1,973M (19%)
Grants from the HEFCE, Teacher Training Agency and Learning and Skills Council £4,128M (39%)
Overseas student fees £583M (6%)
UK charities £401M (4%)
Residences and catering £744M (7%)
Research Council/OST grants and postgraduate fees £708M (7%)
Other government grants (research) £369M (4%)
Other government grants (non-research) £701M (7%)

Total income £10,465 million

Source: HESA finance record, 1999-2000, for English higher education institutions.

- 'Performance indicators in higher education in the UK' (HEFCE 01/69)
- 'Guide for Members of Governing Bodies of Universities and Colleges in England, Wales and Northern Ireland' (HEFCE 01/20)
- 'Higher education in the United Kingdom' (HEFCE 01/56)
- 'Regional profiles of higher education' (HEFCE 01/39)
- 'Contacts in higher education' (HEFCE 02/03)
- HEFCE web-site under 'Universities & colleges'
- HERO web-site www.hero.ac.uk under 'Universities & colleges'

Working in partnership

When funding and developing policies for higher education in England we work with numerous organisations.

Aside from universities and colleges we have most day-to-day contact with the following:

- Government (Department for Education and Skills, Office of Science and Technology, Department of Health)
- national representative bodies (Universities UK, Standing Conference of Principals, Association of Colleges)
- research bodies (the UK Research Councils and the Arts and Humanities Research Board)
- other higher education funding bodies in the UK – Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, and the Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland
- the national and local arms of the Learning and Skills Council, Regional Development Agencies and Government offices.

International work

We aim to contribute to the development of higher education overseas as well as in this country. We strive to learn from international experience and promote UK higher education abroad. To achieve this we collaborate with many organisations nationally and internationally. We work with other governments, higher education funders and higher education providers to:

- develop partnerships
- undertake research into higher education issues
- encourage internationalisation and innovation
- provide information on the qualities and achievements of UK higher education
- promote excellence and disseminate good practice.

We have formed partnerships with other countries covering topics such as higher education reform, funding, quality, management, industry links, and e-learning and academic networks. Examples of our work are:

- we part-funded the broadband link between the major academic networks of China (CERNET) and the UK (JANET) in 1998
- in 2000 we began a project to promote joint working in research teams in the UK and Brazil in areas with industrial application, such as corrosion.

Information available on our web-site:

- HEFCE standards of service
- funding research, teaching & learning, reach-out activity
- links to university and college web pages in England
- links to partner organisations
- HEFCE publications, downloadable in Word and PDF formats

General guides to higher education and HEFCE

These guides are for anyone wanting to know more about our organisation and higher education. They are free from the Corporate Communications team at the HEFCE.

01/56 'Higher education in the United Kingdom'

02/03 'Contacts in higher education'

02/18 'Funding higher education in England: How the HEFCE allocates its funds'

02/01 'HEFCE publications in 2001'

Partners' web-sites

Government – Department for Education and Skills (www.dfes.gov.uk), Office of Science and Technology (www.dti.gov.uk/ost), Department of Health (www.doh.gov.uk)

HERO – the UK higher education portal (www.hero.ac.uk)

Learning and Teaching Support Network – a network of subject centres at UK higher education institutions offering information on learning and teaching (www.ltsn.ac.uk)

Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education – a professional body for higher education teaching staff (www.ilt.ac.uk)

Other UK funding bodies – Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland (www.delni.gov.uk), Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (www.shefc.ac.uk) and Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (www.wfc.ac.uk/hefcw)

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education – an independent body providing a quality assurance service for UK higher education (www.qaa.ac.uk)

Research Assessment Exercise – assesses research at higher education institutions so that funding can be distributed on the basis of quality (www.rae.ac.uk)

Research Councils and Arts and Humanities Research Board – fund research in science and the arts (www.research-councils.ac.uk)

Standing Conference of Principals – represents heads of higher education colleges (www.scop.ac.uk)

Universities UK – represents heads of universities, and promotes the interests of UK universities (www.universitiesuk.ac.uk)

Ways to keep in touch with HEFCE business

Electronic mailing list: Subscribe to our electronic mailing list (admin-hefce) for news of publications and latest developments. To join admin-hefce, send an e-mail message to jiscmail@jiscmail.ac.uk. Leave the subject field blank, and in the body of the message put the words: 'join admin-hefce your first name and your last name' (eg join admin-hefce Jane Brown). Or visit the web-site www.jiscmail.ac.uk

Subscription service: We offer a subscription service for those who want to keep up-to-date with developments affecting universities and colleges. For an annual fee we send you a copy of all HEFCE publications.

Newsletter: Council Briefing provides a round-up of HEFCE business; it is issued six times a year. Council Briefing is available on the web-site under 'Publications' or sent free on request.

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International projects	0117 931 7301 s.wolfenden@hefce.ac.uk
Help-desk	0117 931 7438 hefce@hefce.ac.uk

Standards of service

We have set out the level of service to be expected from the HEFCE in conducting our business.

These standards of service are given in full on our web-site, together with a description of our functions. Below is a summary of the main standards.

Response times

Our aim is to reply to all queries as quickly as possible, and to respond within a maximum of 20 working days depending on the complexity of the enquiry.

Consulting others on our policies

When we undertake a formal consultation, the period between the start of the consultation and the deadline for responses will be:

- a minimum of 12 weeks where a new principle is involved and/or we are seeking views from outside the higher education sector
- a minimum of six weeks where:
  - the relevant funding stream or policy has already been established
  - institutions need to spend the money within a limited period
  - the nature of the response requested makes a six-week period reasonable.

Data collection and verification

- We will respond to queries from institutions that concern verification of their data within three working days.

Special initiative funding

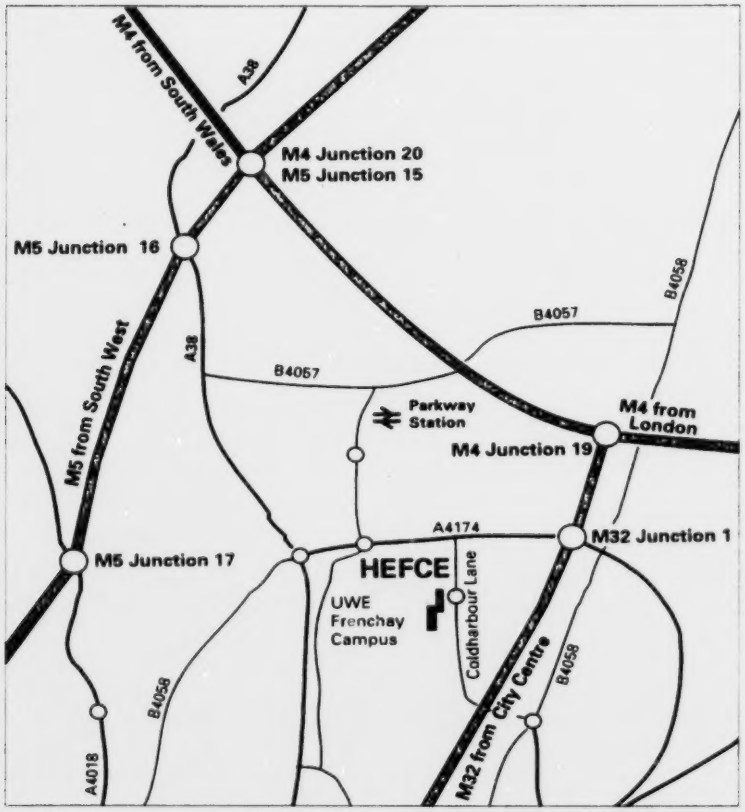
- The time scale for applying for special initiative funding will be as follows:
  - a minimum of 12 weeks except where the cases below apply
  - a minimum of six weeks where:
- we are asking for something institutions should already have
- the relevant funding stream has already been established
- institutions need to spend the money within a limited period
- the nature of the response requested makes a six-week period reasonable.

- www.hefce.ac.uk under 'About us' for links to:
  - Standards of service
  - Frequently asked questions
  - Complaints about the HEFCE

Key terms

Further education	Education provided outside of secondary schools for people over compulsory school age (16 years). Further education courses are generally up to the standard of GCE A-level or NVQ level 3 and take place at a sixth-form college or a further education college rather than in a secondary school
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
Higher education	Courses that are generally above the standard of GCE A-levels or NVQ Level 3, including degree courses and Higher National Diplomas and Certificates
Higher education institution	University or college of higher education
Higher education sector	Universities and colleges of higher education
OST	Office of Science and Technology
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
Research Councils	The six funding agencies for academic research and training in the sciences at universities and institutes throughout the UK. Research is also funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Board
Spending review	The process of setting new plans for public spending by the Government
Special funding	Funding for a fixed period and a specified purpose, sometimes distributed by competitive bidding from HEIs (see page 6)

Location maps



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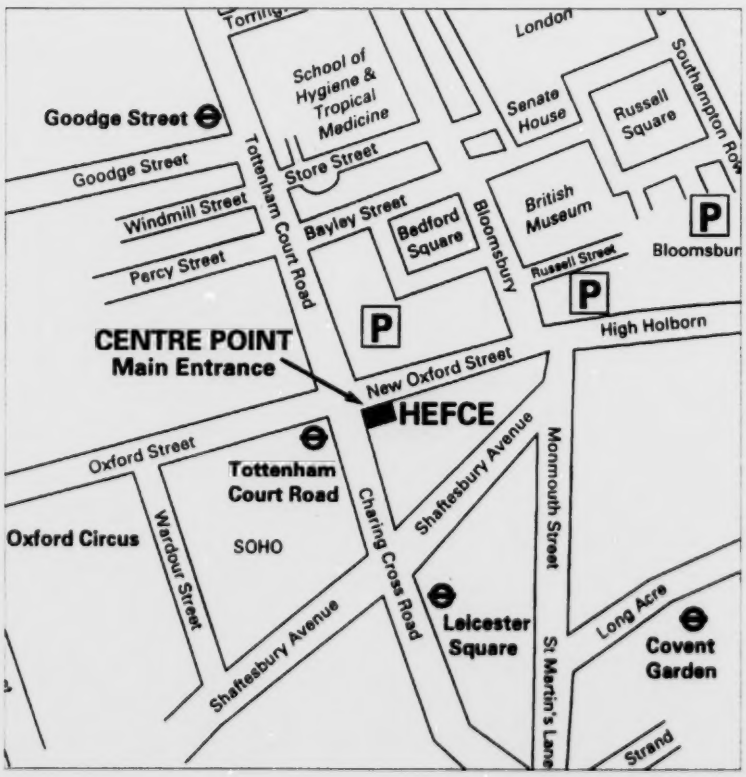

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Alternative formats

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